

Testimony before the Appropriations Committee
March 9, 2023
H.B. No. 6659 AN ACT CONCERNING THE STATE BUDGET FOR THE
BIENNIUM ENDING JUNE 30, 2025

Good evening Senator Osten, Representative Walker and members of the Appropriations Committee. My name is John Greene and I am a registered voter in Norwich.

I am here to offer testimony regarding H.B. No. 6659 AN ACT CONCERNING THE STATE BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM ENDING JUNE 30, 2025

I am here today to support an increase to the proposed DMHAS budget and grant funding for substance abuse and mental health services for non-profit organizations. I am one of the many faces affected by mental health and addiction issues in the state and I have struggled with both for much of my life. I am also here to voice my strong support for organizations such as Reliance Health that receive the same funds, funds that were cut in recent years. Reliance Health provides me with programs and services that are critical to my life and my recovery.

Today, I am here to tell you how important being a member of Reliance Health is to me. At Reliance Health, I am in a program called Penobscot Place which has helped me work on my recovery. This program has helped me develop coping skills, build my sober support network, attend AA meetings, and has been instrumental for me to come back from being an addict to being myself again. Penobscot Place has helped me to become a person in the world again and engage in life around me rather than just isolating in my room. My groups at Penobscot Place are the best part of my day and help me to stay sober and focus on my recovery.

Reliance Health also helps in other ways such as seeing a Nurse Practitioner for my medical needs and to help me deal with cravings and puts purpose back into my life; a life now that has been on a positive recovery track for over 7 years and has made it possible for me to work again, move to a better housing situation, and manage my life more effectively.

If the funds in budget were not available, it would be hard for Reliance Health to continue to provide the services and programs to the people who need it—like me. Without this place (Reliance Health), I would still be outside the world; not engaging and living in hell (as I call it). I really need to be there. If you take these programs away, I don't know what to do. Not only have these programs brought me back to being myself, but people there have become my mentors. Thank you for this opportunity to speak and share my experience with you.